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SUBJECT: LARSEN TELLS SECURITY COUNCIL WHY SYRIA NEEDS TO  
DO MORE ON UNSCR 1559

11. (SBU) Summary. During private consultations with the UNSC on April 26, UN Special Envoy Terje Roed-Larsen robustly argued that full implementation of UNSCR 1559 would not be achieved until Syria responded to Lebanon's offer to demarcate their shared border and establish diplomatic relations. Characterizing these measures as operational requirements at "the heart" of UNSCR 1559, he firmly rejected the Russian argument that these issues are strictly bilateral matters. Lebanon, he said, "simply can't do it alone." On Sheba'a Farms, Larsen wryly observed that "maps are not occupied" to insist that delineation of the border could proceed despite Israeli control of the area. Praising Lebanon's National Dialogue for its decision to disarm Palestinian militias in Lebanon, Larsen argued that both the Taif Agreement and UNSCR 1559 demand that Hizballah follow suit. While he reiterated SYG Annan's view that no leader should remain in office beyond his term, Larsen declined further comment on the fate of Lebanese President Lahoud by noting the National Dialogue would soon take up the issue. He replied to USUN Ambassador Sanders's question about Iranian interference in Lebanon by explaining that he maintains a dialogue with all countries with influence on those "parties" critical to implementation of UNSCR 1559. While Russia offered a general defense of Syria's compliance with UNSCR 1559, Qatar and China delivered relatively neutral interventions that called for full implementation of the resolution but cautioned against outside pressure on the two sides. Argentina, however, expressed reluctance to "impose" a solution. Tanzania, Congo, and Japan joined the P-3 in welcoming the prospect of a new resolution. End Summary.

Larsen Gives Impressive Performance  
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12. (SBU) While he praised the significant progress achieved in the implementation of UNSCR 1559 over the past six months, Larsen noted that several provisions of the resolution had yet to be fulfilled: the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militia; the extension of GOL control over all Lebanese territory; strict respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity, and political independence of Lebanon; and the holding of presidential elections. He made clear that implementing these provisions would depend on the cooperation of parties other than Lebanon. Specifically, he called on Syria to respond to the "outstretched hand" Lebanon had offered to delineate their common border, especially in the Sheba'a Farms area, and to establish full diplomatic relations. Larsen praised the decision taken in the Lebanese National Dialogue to disarm Palestinian militias outside refugee camps in Lebanon, but observed that the Taif Agreement -- which was endorsed by the Arab League -- and UNSCR 1559 both demand that all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militia be disarmed. While acknowledging that some Lebanese see Hizballah as a "resistance group,"

Larsen insisted that the fact that Hizballah is outside the control of the GOL means that it is a militia that should be disarmed. He called on "all parties who have the ability to influence Hizballah and other militias" to urge them to disarm in order to facilitate Lebanon's historical transformation.

#### France and UK Support USG

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13. (SBU) France and the UK joined USUN Ambassador Sanders in defending the need for an ongoing UNSC role in fully restoring Lebanon's sovereignty and in calling on the Council to act on PM Siniora's request for continued UNSC support. Both strongly urged Syria to respond to Lebanon's offer to establish diplomatic relations and demarcate their shared border, with the UK specifically rejecting Syrian arguments that these issues should be handled bilaterally. Recalling references to Iran in the latest report on UNSCR 1559 implementation, the UK highlighted the obligation of all countries to implement the resolution and averred that Iran "must become part of the solution rather than part of the problem." French PermRep de la Sabliere did not cite Iran by name but called on "all those with influence on militias to build on the progress of the National Dialogue." Declaring that the UNSC should "face up to its responsibility to support Lebanon," de la Sabliere announced that France would present a draft text to reinforce Larsen's report and the implementation of UNSCR 1559 in the next few days.

#### Russia Fronts for Syria

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14. (SBU) Offering a general defense of Syria's position,

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Russian Deputy PermRep Dolgov argued that Syria had complied with UNSCR 1559 by withdrawing its troops from Lebanon. He characterized demarcation of borders and establishment of diplomatic relations as "bilateral issues" to be decided between the two sides alone. He expressed hope that PM Siniora would visit Damascus soon. The Russian DPR said "the only solution" to the question of Lahoud's authority is for the Lebanese to resolve the issue themselves "with no outside participation." Describing Hizballah as an "internal Lebanese organization," Dolgov recalled the group's origins vis-a-vis Israel to explain away its refusal to disarm. He went so far as to dismiss concerns about a continued Syrian intelligence presence in Lebanon by arguing that as a sovereign state, "Lebanon is open to ordinary intelligence activities." Praising Syria's "cooperative approach" to its relations with Lebanon, Dolgov noted that Syria had just welcomed UNIIIC head Brammertz to Damascus for an interview with President Asad. He welcomed Larsen's finding that no arms had been transferred across the Syrian-Lebanese border after February 2006 and asked the Special Envoy about Lebanese media reports to the contrary. He regretted "sharp-tongued" statements about Syria by certain Lebanese politicians, blaming such Lebanese rhetoric for the current tension.

#### Qatar and China Relatively Neutral

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15. (SBU) Qatar and China delivered relatively neutral interventions calling for full implementation of UNSCR 1559. Recognizing that the National Dialogue had confirmed the need for a "strong and positive bilateral relationship" between Syria and Lebanon, the Qatari PermRep opined that these links should be based on "mutual respect and shared history" and in a manner the two states "deem suitable." China avoided comment on any of the contentious aspects of Larsen's presentation, with the sole exception of an assertion that Lebanon's internal issues (presumably a reference to Lahoud's presidency) should be resolved in a "constitutional manner." The Argentinian PermRep urged Syria to cooperate fully with

Lebanon, but argued that dialogue between the two sides should not be imposed from the outside. On Sheba'a Farms, however, he stated that Israeli occupation of the area is "no excuse (for the government of Lebanon) to fail to fulfill UNSCR 1559" by disarming militias and extending its authority over all its territory.

#### Other UNSC Members Generally Support Larsen

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¶16. (SBU) Most other UNSC members voiced general support for Larsen's efforts to implement UNSCR 1559. Peru and Denmark urged Syria and Lebanon to demarcate their border and establish diplomatic links. Noting Siniora's contention that Sheba'a Farms is the key to resolving the militia issue, Peru asked if the UNSC could take custody of the area pending its transfer to Syria or Lebanon. Slovakia and Tanzania agreed with Peru that Sheba'a is a key to resolving the issue and that its status should be clarified. The Japanese expressed hope that Lebanon would hold free and fair presidential elections, while Greece observed that full implementation of UNSCR 1559 would help ensure stability in the region. Japan, Tanzania, and Congo welcomed the prospect of a new resolution.

#### Larsen Rebutts His Critic(s)

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¶17. (SBU) After interventions by UNSC delegates, Larsen offered a spirited rebuttal of the Russian position and defended his own interpretation of the UNSCR, arguing that resolving the issue of the border and establishing embassies are operational requirements of 1559. Citing language from the resolution, he said these two activities are "part and parcel" and "the heart" of UNSCR 1559. Achieving Lebanon's territorial integrity requires establishment of the border with Syria; obtaining strict respect for Lebanon's sovereignty and political independence depends upon the establishment of embassies. He observed that Syria and Lebanon are the only two countries in the Arab League without diplomatic relations. In an indirect bid for a new resolution, he advised the Council that it "takes two to tango" and "Lebanon can't do it alone."

¶18. (SBU) On Sheba'a Farms, Larsen recalled the history of UNSCR 425, highlighting the conclusion by the UN Secretary-General in 2000 that the area is Syrian territory

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-- a conclusion that the Council has repeatedly endorsed,

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including Syria during its term as an elected member of the Security Council. He explained however, that the Blue Line is a line of withdrawal, not a formal boundary, and clarified that the UN had therefore maintained it was subject to review. Now that Syria and Lebanon have agreed that the territory is Lebanese, Larsen mused that the two sides are well-positioned to draw a line delineating their border. He outlined three ways to do so. The first two options -- international arbitration or referral to the International Court of Justice -- are not feasible because Syria has rejected third party involvement. The remaining option is a bilateral agreement between the two countries. Larsen rejected the argument that Israeli control of Sheba'a prevents negotiation of such an agreement, observing that "maps are not occupied" and that the delineation process could begin immediately. Demarcation of the physical border, he averred, could be addressed later.

¶19. (SBU) Larsen responded to questions about Lahoud's authority by reiterating SYG Annan's view that no leader should serve longer than his term in office, a principle which he said applies to Lebanon as well. He agreed that Hizballah's fate should be decided domestically, but on the basis of the Taif Agreement and UNSCR 1559. Describing UNSCR

1559 as an "instrument in support of Taif," which he recalled has been endorsed by the Arab League, Larsen reported that Taif had stipulated that all militias should be disbanded within six months. By contrast, the Security Council had not established a deadline in UNSCR 1559. Discounting Lebanese media reports of arms transfers from Syria to Lebanon after February 2006, Larsen said he had no information to back up these claims. He admitted that while the GOL and SARG had supplied conflicting reports about the presence of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon, he had no way to verify either story. In response to Ambassador Sanders's question about Iranian interference in Lebanon, Larsen explained he engaged in a dialogue with those countries that have influence on the "parties" (i.e., Syria and Iran) whose support is essential to achieve implementation of UNSCR 1559.

Comment: Delineation vs. Demarcation

¶10. (SBU) Larsen's aide Fabrice Aidan told us that Larsen chose to emphasize "delineation" of the border on the map rather than physical "demarcation" on the ground as a way to counter arguments that Israel must withdraw from Sheba'a Farms before the process of establishing the Syrian-Lebanese border can begin.  
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